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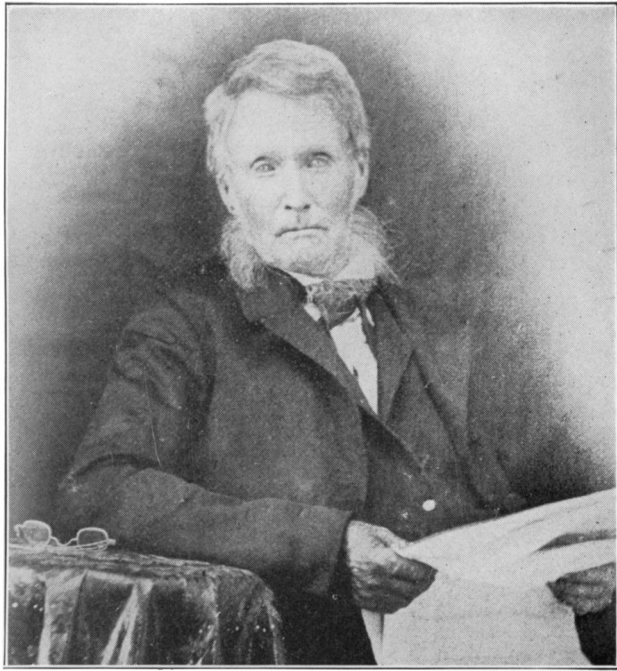
**LEWIS BAYLEY, ONE OF LA SALLE COUNTY'S FIRST
SETTLERS AND AUGUSTUS BAILEY, LA SALLE
COUNTY'S FIRST BORN MALE WHITE CHILD.**

By WILLIAM R. SANDHAM, Wyoming, Illinois.

Our historical reading produces good evidence that there is a certain halo about the lives of the first born and the first settler in a state, a county, and even in a township and in a town. Judging from the number of inquiries this halo distinctly appears around the lives of Lewis Bayley who was the first white settler in what is now Vermillion township in LaSalle county, Illinois, and his son, Augustus Bailey, who was the first male white child born in what is now LaSalle county, Illinois.

The first white people who lived in what is now LaSalle county, Illinois, were the French fur traders and adventurers who came to the Illinois country during the time between the years 1680 and 1700, and settled on the Illinois river above and below what is now known as Starved Rock. Soon after the year 1700 those fur traders and adventurers moved to the southern part of the Illinois country and permanently settled near the mouth of the Kaskaskia River. When those French people came they found the country adjoining the Illinois river a wilderness of creeks, swamps, woods and prairies. When they left it was still a wilderness of creeks, swamps, woods and prairies.

It was not until the time between the years 1822 and 1828 that permanent settlers came to occupy and cultivate the fertile soil of what is now LaSalle county, Illinois. Those first comers, among them a Doctor Davidson and Jesse Walker, a missionary, and a few others, built the first houses or cabins just south of the Illinois river and south of the present city of Ottawa. Among those first comers were Lewis Bayley, his wife Betsy (Butler) Bayley and a couple of children. The Bayleys settled, or to use a word more applicable to the time, squatted on a piece of land about ten miles south of the



LEWIS BAILEY.

Illinois river and near what is now the village of Tonica, and by so doing became the first settlers of what is now Vermilion township in LaSalle county, Illinois.

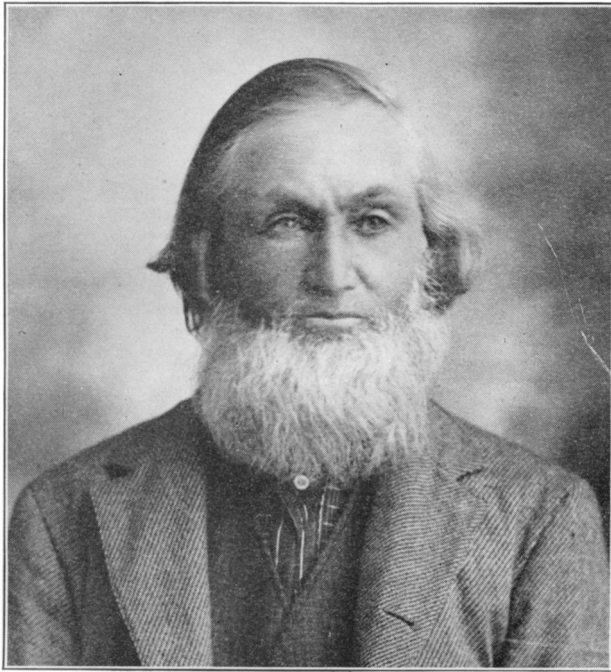
Lewis Bayley, one of the thirteen children of Timothy Bayley, a soldier in the Revolutionary war, and Zeruah (Blodgett) Bayley, was born in Haverhill, Grafton county, New Hampshire, August 25, 1784. He attended such schools as there were where he lived, when he was not needed as an assistant in his father's blacksmith shop. The day after he was twenty-one years old, to be exact, August 26, 1805, he left his native county, and with a few dollars in his pocket and a change of clothing in a bundle hung on a stick over his shoulder, he walked all the way to Clark county, Ohio. Soon after arriving there he pre-empted a piece of land, built a cabin on it, and walked back to his father's home in New Hampshire, reaching there just as winter set in. During that winter of 1805-1806 he and his father and his brothers made wagons, made and bought other necessary equipment for moving to the distant, and at that time the new state of Ohio. In May, 1806, Timothy Bayley, his wife and all his children except one daughter, loaded their belongings into their newly made wagons, and turned their faces toward the west to make new homes in a pioneering community. Some of the wagons were drawn by oxen, the others by horses. The tires on those wagons were made in sections and riveted on to the fellys. The process of making whole tires and putting them on by heating and shrinking was not known at that time.

When Lewis Bayley was going to and returning from Ohio in 1805 he stayed over night at a tavern in Pelham, Hillsborough county, New Hampshire. On the return trip it is probable that he stayed there more than one night as he fell ardently in love with the landlord's daughter, Betsy Butler by name. While on their way to Ohio the Bayley family passed through Pelham, and then and there Lewis Bayley and Betsy Butler, aged eighteen, were married, and the bride accompanied her husband to the new home in Ohio. After a long and tiresome journey the Bayley family arrived in Clark county, Ohio, where Lewis Bayley had pre-empted land and built a cabin the year before. They began immediately to establish new homes in what was then a pioneering part

of the state of Ohio. The family tradition is that Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Bayley and children made good as pioneers and permanent residents in Clark county, Ohio. Timothy Bayley was awarded a pension in 1819 when he was seventy years old, as a reward for his services in the Revolutionary War. He died September 19, 1825. His widow, Zeruah Bayley, was awarded a pension in 1837, when she was eighty-one years old. She died in 1852.

During the War of 1812 Lewis Bayley served, part of the time as a drummer, from February 5, 1813, to August 12, 1813, in Captain Hasbrook's company, first Ohio militia.

In the early part of the year 1825, the desire of being again pioneers became very strong with Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Bayley, and in the spring of that year they and two children, with a well equipped wagon, or prairie schooner, as such a vehicle came to be known later, again turned their faces toward the west. The wagon being drawn by oxen made the journey a long and tedious one. It was a wild and almost unknown country to which they were going. The roads, where were any, were all poorly made, not much like the roads of today and most of the streams were without bridges. The pioneer blood in their bodies kept them both cheerful and happy. Their journey ended in what was then a part of Fayette county, Illinois, which became a part of the county of LaSalle which was created in 1831. Their first stopping place was at the small settlement of white people just south of the Illinois river near what is now the city of Ottawa. In a short time Mr. Bayley began to look for a suitable location to establish a home for himself and family. The settlers of that time in Illinois were many of them called squatters, the name being applied to those settlers who located on the United States government land with the intention of buying it later. After a much needed rest the Bayleys squatted on a part of section 18, township 32 north, range 2 east of the third principal meridian, and by so doing they became the first settlers of what is now Vermillion township, LaSalle county, Illinois. They may also be classed among the first settlers in LaSalle county. The place where the Bayleys squatted is what has been called Baileys Grove and called Baileys Point by the early settlers. As near as can be ascertained their cabin was



AUGUSTUS BAILEY.

built and permanently occupied in the fall of 1825. Occasional trips were made during the winter to the settlement on the Illinois river. Mrs. Bayley did not see a white woman during the spring, summer and fall of 1826, but she was often visited by Indian women. The place selected by the Bayleys for a home was a favorite resort of the Pottawattamie Indians who lived in the vicinity. Those Indians and the Baileys became friends as well neighbors. They trusted each other and lived near each other in peace and harmony. The Pottawattamie chief Shabbona frequently visited the Bayleys in their cabin home. When he stayed all night he slept on the floor wrapped in his blanket. During all his life Lewis Bayley expressed a favorable opinion of the Illinois Indians. He always firmly declared that those Indians were more honest, more friendly, and even more trustworthy, than a great many white people. On December 21, 1833, Lewis Bayley received from the United States a patent for eighty acres of land in what is now Vermillion township, and for eighty acres in what is now Eden township, LaSalle county, Illinois. The two children born in Ohio died before 1828.

On July 17, 1828, a son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Bayley at the small settlement on the Illinois river, south of what is now Ottawa, where Mrs. Bayley was sojourning to be near a doctor. That son of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Bayley, who has the distinction of being the first male white child born in what is now LaSalle county, Illinois, was named Augustus. A son named Orpheus was born in 1834 at Fort Clark, now the city of Peoria. Mrs. Bayley and the son Orpheus both died a few days apart in the year 1840. They were buried on the farm where they died. Some time between the years 1855 and 1860 the bodies were moved to the Tonica cemetery. Mrs. Bayley left two sons, Augustus and Timothy, the latter born in 1837. In March, 1843, Lewis Bayley married Miss Mary Lake of Stark county, Illinois. Besides his work as a farmer, Mr. Bayley operated a saw mill some where on Bailey creek or on the Vermillion river near Bailey falls. The several natural features, such as Bailey creek, Bailey falls, Bailey's point and Bailey's grove, show that the Bayley family was one of considerable importance among the early settlers in LaSalle county.

Some time between the years 1846 and 1848, Lewis Bayley sold his property in LaSalle county, and in 1849, with his wife and two sons, moved to what is now Essex township in Stark county, Illinois. In the course of time Mr. Bayley bought an extensive body of land in Essex township which he and his sons farmed until "age began to tire and doth in sharp pains abound." The Indian chief Shabbona before his death in 1859, visited Mr. Bayley several times at his home in Essex township. When he stayed all night he slept on the floor wrapped in his blanket, the same as he did in LaSalle county, when he was a young and able-bodied Indian. Mrs. Bayley died at the home in Essex township, March 31, 1861, Mr. Bayley had inscribed on her tombstone "A GOOD WIFE AND A KIND STEP-MOTHER."

In the spring of 1875, Lewis Bayley, accompanied by his son Timothy, went to Oregon to visit his brother Daniel who had crossed the plains and mountains and went to that then distant land in the year 1842. When he left Illinois he told his friends and relatives that he was "again going pioneering." He did not pioneer very long this time, as he died at Forest Grove, Washington county, Oregon, September 10, 1876.

The Baldwin History of LaSalle county says that Lewis Bayley "was doubtless somewhat misanthropic." Mr. Bayley's relatives and people who knew him in Stark county firmly assert that he was not misanthropic, but on the contrary he was just the opposite, a strong lover of all human kind. The military record of the Bayley family is somewhat remarkable. Timothy Bayley, father of Lewis Bayley, was a soldier in the Revolutionary War. He was in the battles of Bunker Hill, Bennington and Saratoga. Lewis Bayley was a soldier in the War of 1812, and his son, Timothy Bailey, served for over three years in the Civil war of 1861-1865. A son of Timothy Bailey served as a soldier in France during the great World war.

Lewis Bayley always spelled his surname Bayley. His descendants spell the name Bailey. Lewis Bayley was a descendant of Joseph Bailey who came to Massachusetts from Yorkshire, England, in 1635 or 1638.

The material from which the greater part of this little history was prepared was obtained from a letter to the writer

from Timothy Bailey, son of Lewis Bayley, who lives in Centralia, Lewis county, Washington.

Augustus Bailey, son of Lewis Bayley and Betsy (Butler) Bayley, the first male white child born in what is now LaSalle county, Illinois, was born July 17, 1828, on the south side of the Illinois river and south of what is now the city of Ottawa. At that time there was a small settlement of white people at that point on the river, where Mrs. Bayley was sojourning to be near a doctor. During the Black Hawk war the Pottawattamie chief Shabbona, who was a friend of the white people, by traveling day and night warned the white settlers of the impending danger of a massacre of the settlers by the adherents of the chief Black Hawk. Among the cabin homes visited was that of Lewis Bayley. As a result of that warning Mrs. Bayley and the boy, Augustus, sought shelter and protection in the fort at Ottawa, where they staid until the danger of massacre was over.

From the time the boy Augustus was old enough to work he was his father's assistant in farming. From the time of his mother's death in 1840, until the second marriage of his father in 1843, he was his father's assistant in the work of housekeeping. He was taught to read by his mother, and attended such schools as there were in LaSalle county after 1835. He faithfully read all books and papers that came his way, and as a result he became known from 1860 to the time of his death as a well read and fairly well educated man. He moved to what is now Essex township, Stark county, Illinois, with his father in 1849. There he became a successful and prosperous farmer.

Augustus Bailey was married to Miss Catharine Smith of Jacksonville, Illinois, November 1, 1859. Mrs. Bailey, daughter of Alexander and Isabella Smith, was born in Nairn, Nairnshire, Scotland, May 24, 1829. She came to the United States in 1853. Mrs. Bailey was known in the community in which she lived in Stark county, Illinois, as a very capable helpmate, an excellent mother, a good and sympathetic neighbor, and a cultured lady. Mrs. Bailey died in Essex township, April 26, 1899. Augustus Bailey died in Wyoming, Illinois, August 25, 1905, just one day less than one hundred years from the time his father, Lewis Bayley, started on his

long walk from his native county in New Hampshire, to seek for a new home for himself and his father's family in the then new state of Ohio.

At the time of his death Augustus Bailey and his two sons, Orpheus and Alexander C., were the owners of 750 acres of the fertile land in Stark county, Illinois. The two sons are married and live in Wyoming, Illinois. Like their father and grandfather before them they are both engaged in farming. Alexander C. has eight children and six grandchildren.

The Doctor Davidson mentioned in the foregoing sketch, and in the Baldwin History of LaSalle county, as the first settler of LaSalle county, has also the distinction of being the first settler in Fulton county. It is a tradition in both of these counties that this Doctor Davidson was a man of considerable culture and refinement, whose greatest desire was to live a recluse life far from the habitations of white people. He came to Fulton county some time before the year 1818 and built a cabin on the bank of Spoon river. It is authoritatively stated that he named the stream Spoon river, because of its shape near where he built his cabin. On account of the rapid incoming of white settlers and the increasing closeness of neighbors, he left Fulton county in 1822, and established another hermit home on a bluff on the Illinois river, which is now a part of the city of Ottawa called South Ottawa, where he lived until the time of his death in the year 1826. After his death his effects found in his cabin were sold and Lewis Bayley bought his trunk. That trunk was taken to Stark county, Illinois, in 1849, and it is now in possession of Orpheus Bailey, one of Lewis Bayley's grand sons.

A few years ago Miss Fanny M. Davidson, one of the editors of *The Fulton Democrat* of Lewistown, Illinois, made some historical research and she found that this Doctor Davidson, hermit and first settler in Fulton and LaSalle counties, whose name was William Thompson Davidson (not Davidson as spelled in the histories of Fulton county) was a soldier, probably a surgeon, in the War of 1812, and came to Illinois about 1818 and built a cabin on Spoon river, in which he lived the life of a recluse until 1822. Dr. Davidson came to Illinois from Bedford County, Pennsylvania.